

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /089 W

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R 221617Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3789

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 17285

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: POLITICIANS' COMMENTS ON MBFR

BEGIN SUMMARY: WILLY BRANDT'S REMARKS IN LONDON ABOUT SYMBOLIC TROOP REDUCTIONS IN MBFR HAVE MET WITH A FROSTY RECEPTION IN BONN. BOTH FONMIN GENSCHER AND DEFMIN LEBER WERE REPORTED TO HAVE CRITICIZED THE IDEA AS NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH WESTERN NEGOTIATING GOALS IN MBFR. BUNDESTAG CDU/CSU DEFENSE SPOKESMAN WOERNER CHARGED BRANDT WITH SEEKING TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF DETENTE RATHER THAN THE SUBSTANCE. WOERNER ALSO WARNED THAT THE POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF WESTERN TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE THE FIRST STEP ON THE DANGEROUS ROAD TOWARD DENUCLEARIZATION OF EUROPE. END SUMMARY.

1. WILLY BRANDT'S REMARKS ON MBFR IN LONDON ON OCT. 6 CAUGHT FRG MBFR OFFICIALS AS MUCH BY SURPRISE AS OTHERS. ALL OFFICIALS WHOM WE QUERIED ON THE SUBJECT WERE AT SECRET

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A LOSS TO EXPLAIN BRANDT'S MOTIVES. IT IS THE CON-

SENSUS AMONG OFFICIALS HERE THAT BRANDT ACTED STRICTLY ON HIS OWN AND THAT NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT NOR THE PARTY KNEW WHAT HE PLANNED TO SAY. BRANDT HAS PRIVATELY EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT HE WAS TRYING TO BE HELPFUL TO THE US IN REFERRING TO THE IMPLICIT FRG AGREEMENT TO PLAY THE NUCLEAR OPTION.

2. BRANDT'S STATEMENT DID NOT RECEIVE EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE IN THE FRG. HOWEVER, MANFRED WOERNER, CDU/CSU DEFENSE SPOKESMAN, IN A RECENT RADIO INTERVIEW CONCERNING EAST-WEST DETENTE, COMMENTED ON BRANDT'S CALL FOR A SYMBOLIC REDUCTION OF FORCES. WOERNER INDICATED THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL HAD LONG SINCE BEEN DISCARDED FOR GOOD REASONS BY THE WEST, SINCE NO ONE IS PROPERLY SERVED BY SUCH A MOVE. WOERNER CONTINUED THAT ONLY AN ILLUSION OF DETENTE WOULD BE CREATED BY SUCH A PROPOSAL WHEREAS THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROBLEM WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED.

3. AS FOR BRANDT'S REFERENCE TO THE POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF WESTERN TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE NEGOTIATION, WOERNER HAD SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY OF SUCH A STEP. WOERNER ARGUED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS NOT BEEN VERY FORTHCOMING THUS FAR IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND HE SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE WEST WOULD PLACE ITSELF UNDER PRESSURE TO ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE NEGOTIATING STANCE. WOERNER ALSO MADE THE POINT THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS ONLY IF IT IS CLEAR THAT A SPECIFIC LEVEL OF SUCH WEAPONS WILL BE MAINTAINED AND THAT THIS FIRST REDUCTION IS NOT THE HARBINGER OF FUTURE CUTS WHICH WOULD AFFECT THE NUCLEAR DEFENSE OF EUROPE. WOERNER SAID ENOUGH NUCLEAR WEAPONS MUST REMAIN IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A DETERRENT EFFECT COMPARABLE TO THAT WHICH OBTAINED PREVIOUSLY. WOERNER CONCLUDED HIS COMMENTS BY NOTING THAT THE WEST SHOULD NOT ENTER LIGHTLY UPON SUCH PERILOUS TERRAIN IN VIENNA WHICH ONE DAY COULD END IN THE DENUCLEARIZATION OF EUROPE.

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4. FONMIN GENSCHER AND DEFMIN LEBER JOINED THE PUBLIC DEBATE WITH BRANDT THIS PAST WEEKEND. AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE OCTOBER 18 EDITION OF "DIE WELT" WRITTEN BY BONN CORRESPONDENT BERNT CONRAD INDICATED THAT BOTH FRG MINISTERS DECLINE TO CONSIDER SYMBOLIC TROOP REDUCTIONS AS SUGGESTED BY BRANDT SINCE, IN THEIR OPINION, IT WOULD CONFIRM THE PRESENT DISPARITIES AND WOULD RUN COUNTER TO WESTERN GOALS IN MBFR. THE

ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT A SPECIAL PROBLEM IN MBFR IS THAT THE WARSAW PACT WANTS TO DETERMINE EXACTLY HOW MANY TROOPS EACH PARTICIPATING STATE WILL REDUCE. CONRAD WRITES THAT THE FRG IS NOT PREPARED TO DO THIS BECAUSE IT WILL GIVE THE SOVIETS THE POSSIBILITY OF DETERMINING NATO'S INTERNAL TROOP DISTRIBUTION. A

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BONN MBFR EXPERT IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "OTHERWISE, MBFR COULD BECOME A CONFERENCE ABOUT THE BUNDESWEHR --EXACTLY WHAT WE DON'T WANT IT TO BE."

5. THE CONRAD ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT THE FRG WANTS A COMMON CEILING ON GROUND FORCES, WITH EACH SIDE DETERMINING ITS OWN REDUCTION QUOTAS. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY NOTING THAT THE FRG HAS A BASIC INTEREST IN A SUCCESSFUL RESULT FROM THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. THEREFORE, THE FRG, IN CONJUNCTION WITH ITS ALLIES, HAS MADE CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS ACCORDING TO CONRAD. (COMMENT: NEITHER GENSCHER NOR LEBER IS QUOTED

DIRECTLY IN THE ARTICLE. IT APPEARS TO BE BASED ON A
BACKGROUND WITH ONE OR MORE FRG OFFICIALS).

6. COMMENT: PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON MBFR HAVE BEEN THE
EXCEPTION RATHER THAN THE RULE IN THE FRG. HOWEVER,
WHEN THE ALLIANCE FINALLY INTRODUCES THE NUCLEAR
OPTION AND ANNOUNCES THAT IT HAS DONE SO, WE ANTI-
CIPATE THAT OPPOSITION POLITICIANS WILL TAKE THEIR
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CASE TO THE PUBLIC SHOULD THEY PERCEIVE THAT THE OPTION
IMPACTS DETRIMENTALLY ON FRG SECURITY. THIS EXPECTED
REACTION UNDERLINES THE FUTURE IMPORTANCE AND USE-
FULNESS FOR FRG OFFICIALS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENTATION
PAPER ON OPTION III NOW UNDER STUDY AT NATO.

7. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WOERNER'S VOICE ON DEFENSE
MATTERS IS STILL THE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE OPPOSITION.
HIS DOUBTS ABOUT THE ADVISABILITY OF INTRODUCING
OPTION III WILL PROBABLY TEND TO MAKE FRG OFFICIALS EVEN
MORE CAUTIOUS IN THE POSITIONS THEY TAKE TO SAFEGUARD
GERMAN INTERESTS.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL, DETENTE, POLITICAL LEADERS, NEGOTIATIONS, MUTUAL FORCE REDUCTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN17285
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750367-0298
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751030/aaaabaml.tel
Line Count: 196
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ACDA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 APR 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <15 OCT 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: POLITICIANS' COMMENTS ON MBFR BEGIN SUMMARY: WILLY BRANDT'S REMARKS IN LONDON ABOUT
TAGS: PARM, GE, NATO, MBFR, (BRANDT, WILLY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006